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10/603,589	06/25/2003	Masahiro Kurahashi	CANO:075	3345
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/603,589

Applicant(s)

KURAHASHI ET AL.

Examiner

Chad Dickerson

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 January 2008.
2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9, 14, 15, 19 and 20 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) 10-13, 16-18 and 21-23 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9, 14, 15, 19 and 20 is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 25 June 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsman's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1-5, 7-9, 14, 15, 19 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Mandel '544 (US Pat No 5435544).

Re claim 1: Mandel '544 discloses an image forming apparatus comprising:

an image forming device that forms images on sheets in accordance with an image forming job (**i.e. the system is usable with printing device that is used to produce hardcopy prints of a document. Since the printing device is used to print images on a sheet, the feature of the image forming apparatus is performed; see col. 1, line 62 – col. 2, line 38 and col. 7, lines 14-34**);

a conveying device that conveys the sheets on which the images have been formed by said image forming device (**i.e. with the printing device being connected to the mailboxing unit, the system involves directing a job that has been printed to the mailboxing unit in order to be stored into a bin for user retrieval. Since the jobs end up in the attached bin, the system has to include a means to convey the print job to the bin. The input feeder is used to input sheets from the printing device to the mailbox unit (10); see col. 1, line 60-col. 4, line 59 and col. 21, line**

30-col. 22, line 39) to a container detachably attached to the image forming apparatus (i.e. the mailboxing unit is considered as a container that is attachable to any copier, facsimile or printing device. The mailboxing unit contains many mailbox bins that are used to store print jobs that are directed from the printer to the mailboxing unit; col. 1, line 60-col. 4, line 59 and col. 21, line 30-col. 22, line 39); and

a writing device that writes information relating to the image forming job for the sheets conveyed by said conveying device into a memory provided in the container (i.e. **in the system, when jobs are printed and conveyed to the mailbox unit, these jobs are then collated and sorted into a bin that is in the mailboxing unit. Next, the bin assigned to a print job is then stored or written in a memory in order for the bin assignment to be recognized in the memory device when the user desires to retrieve the print jobs from the mailbox unit. The function of writing information in a memory unit is performed when the bin assignment is recorded or written on memory; see col. 30, lines 38-54).**

Re claim 2: The teachings of Mandel '544 are disclosed above.

Mandel '544 discloses an image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said writing device writes identification information relating to the image forming job (i.e. **in the system, the user enters in "log-in" information or passwords that identify the print job that is stored in a respective bin the mailboxing unit. The system stores**

or writes this information in memory and the controller (100) refers to this information when the user enters this information in the system to retrieve a print job; see col. 27, line 24-col. 28, line 68).

Re claim 3: The teachings of Mandel '544 are disclosed above.

Mandel '544 discloses an image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said writing device writes page information relating to the images formed on the sheets (i.e. **bins in the mailboxing unit are assigned with print job information. The bin assignments are stored in memory. The memory stores the information in relation to the page, which is shown in figure 5; see col. 30, lines 38-54).**

Re claim 4: The teachings of Mandel '544 are disclosed above.

Mandel '544 discloses an image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said writing device writes information relating to at least one selected from the group consisting of sheet size, print number, number of sheets, number of copies, sheet stacking method, material, page order, and image forming apparatus identity (i.e. **the job information that is associated with the bin assignment is stored in memory. The job information that is stored in relation to the bin assignment contains a number of pages in the document, paper size(s) in the document and the number of copies; see col. 30, lines 38-54).**

Re claim 5: The teachings of Mandel '544 are disclosed above.

Mandel '544 discloses an image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said writing device writes at least one selected from the group consisting of information for distinguishing a sheet with an abnormality (i.e. in the system of Mandel '544, the sheets that are sent to the printing device for printing are distinguished to be related to a certain bin and that bin is related to a user using the printing device connected to the mailboxing unit. The feature of distinguishing a sheet sent from one user from print jobs sent from other users is performed as shown in figure 18. This information is stored in memory with the information of relating to the print job. The system of Mandel '544 can write information in memory regarding print job information of a sheets or sheets and accommodate sheets that are abnormal in some manner. Shown in column 24, lines 16-24, a sheet is considered as abnormal since it is very large. The system detects this information through sensors, or from information being sent to the mailboxing unit from the printing device (as shown in figure 5, the paper size). The system distinguishes the sheet size and folds the abnormal sheet to be accommodated in the bin; see fig. 5 and 18; col. 2, lines 52-65 and col. 23, line 35 – col. 24, line 24) and information for distinguishing a set of sheets that include a sheet with an abnormality (i.e. in the system, sheets within a set can be distinguished from each other in finished or unfinished sets. In a print job that contains abnormal sheets in size, the system can determine the sheet with the abnormal size and perform

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appropriate processing of the sheet; see col. 6, lines 8-26 and col. 23, line 35 – col. 24, line 24).

Re claim 7: The teachings of Mandel '544 are disclosed above.

Mandel '544 discloses an image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the container is detachably attached to another image forming apparatus and contains sheets (i.e. **the mailboxing unit is attached or detached from any printing device in the system in order to sort printing jobs in assigned bins along with the bin assignment, along with other information, stored in the system memory; col. 1, line 60-col. 4, line 59 and col. 21, line 30-col. 22, line 39).**

Re claim 8: Mandel '544 discloses an image forming apparatus comprising:

an image forming device that forms images on sheets in accordance with an image forming job (i.e. **the system is usable with printing device that is used to produce hardcopy prints of a document. Since the printing device is used to print images on a sheet, the feature of the image forming apparatus is performed; see col. 1, line 62 – col. 2, line 38 and col. 7, lines 14-34);**

a feeding device that feeds sheets stored in a container (i.e. **with the printing device being connected to the mailboxing unit, the system involves directing a job that has been printed to the mailboxing unit in order to be stored into a bin for**

user retrieval. Since the jobs end up in the attached bin, the system has to include a means to convey the print job to the bin. The input feeder is used to input sheets from the printing device to the mailbox unit (10); see col. 1, line 60-col. 4, line 59 and col. 21, line 30-col. 22, line 39) detachably attached to the image forming apparatus (i.e. the mailboxing unit is attached or detached from any printing device in the system in order to sort printing jobs in assigned bins along with the bin assignment, along with other information, stored in the system memory; col. 1, line 60-col. 4, line 59 and col. 21, line 30-col. 22, line 39); and

a reading device that reads information written into a memory provided in the container and relating to the image forming job for the sheets stored in the container (i.e. in the system, the controller (100) in the mailbox unit (10) reads information written into the memory regarding the print jobs stored. The controller reads the password, or log-in, information of the bin once the user enters in this information in order to obtain the print job in the bin. Once the controller reads the information related to the print job in the bin stored in the memory and verifies this information matches the password or identification information, then the bin is unlocked for the user to obtain the printed print job; see col. 21, line 30-col. 22, line 39 and col. 27, line 30-col. 30, line 54).

Re claim 9: The teachings of Mandel '544 are disclosed above.

Mandel '544 discloses an image forming apparatus according to claim 8, comprising a control device that performs processing of at least one sheet with an abnormality contained in the container, based on the information read by said reading device (**i.e. in the system, the controller (100) of the mailboxing unit receives information of paper size(s) of the incoming sheets. The incoming paper sizes can deem the sheet an abnormal sheet to the system. The sensor can sense the size of the sheet(s) or the controller can read the paper size of the sheet incoming into the mailboxing unit by reading the memory storing the sheet size. After the paper size is determined, the processing of the abnormal sheet can performed based on the read paper size, which is considered as the stored print job information, or the sensed paper size in order to accommodate the abnormal sheet; see fig. 5 and 18; col. 2, lines 52-65 and col. 23, line 35 – col. 24, line 24).**

Re claim 14: Mandel '544 discloses an image forming system having a plurality of image forming apparatuses, and a network via which the image forming apparatuses are connected (see col. 1, lines 28-53 and col. 2, lines 44-51), at least one of the image forming apparatuses comprising:

an image forming device that forms images on sheets in accordance with an image forming job (**i.e. the system is usable with printing device that is used to produce hardcopy prints of a document. Since the printing device is used to print images on a sheet, the feature of the image forming apparatus is performed; see col. 1, line 62 – col. 2, line 38 and col. 7, lines 14-34);**

a conveying device that conveys the sheets on which the images have been formed by said image forming device (i.e. with the printing device being connected to the mailboxing unit, the system involves directing a job that has been printed to the mailboxing unit in order to be stored into a bin for user retrieval. Since the jobs end up in the attached bin, the system has to include a means to convey the print job to the bin. The input feeder is used to input sheets from the printing device to the mailbox unit (10); see col. 1, line 60-col. 4, line 59 and col. 21, line 30-col. 22, line 39) to a container detachably attached to the image forming apparatus (i.e. the mailboxing unit is considered as a container that is attachable to any copier, facsimile or printing device. The mailboxing unit contains many mailbox bins that are used to store print jobs that are directed from the printer to the mailboxing unit; col. 1, line 60-col. 4, line 59 and col. 21, line 30-col. 22, line 39); and

a writing device that writes information relating to the image forming job for the sheets conveyed by said conveying device into a memory provided in the container (i.e. in the system, when jobs are printed and conveyed to the mailbox unit, these jobs are then collated and sorted into a bin that is in the mailboxing unit. Next, the bin assigned to a print job is then stored or written in a memory in order for the bin assignment to be recognized in the memory device when the user desires to retrieve the print jobs from the mailbox unit. The function of writing information in a memory unit is performed when the bin assignment is recorded or written on memory; see col. 30, lines 38-54).

Re claim 15: Mandel '544 discloses an image forming system having a plurality of image forming apparatuses, and a network via which the image forming apparatuses are connected (**see col. 1, lines 28-53 and col. 2, lines 44-51**), at least one of the image forming apparatuses comprising:

an image forming device that forms images on sheets in accordance with an image forming job (**i.e. the system is usable with printing device that is used to produce hardcopy prints of a document. Since the printing device is used to print images on a sheet, the feature of the image forming apparatus is performed; see col. 1, line 62 – col. 2, line 38 and col. 7, lines 14-34**);

a feeding device that feeds sheets stored in a container (**i.e. with the printing device being connected to the mailboxing unit, the system involves directing a job that has been printed to the mailboxing unit in order to be stored into a bin for user retrieval. Since the jobs end up in the attached bin, the system has to include a means to convey the print job to the bin. The input feeder is used to input sheets from the printing device to the mailbox unit (10); see col. 1, line 60-col. 4, line 59 and col. 21, line 30-col. 22, line 39**) detachably attached to the image forming apparatus (**i.e. the mailboxing unit is attached or detached from any printing device in the system in order to sort printing jobs in assigned bins along with the bin assignment, along with other information, stored in the system memory; col. 1, line 60-col. 4, line 59 and col. 21, line 30-col. 22, line 39**); and

a reading device that reads information written into a memory provided in the container and relating to the image forming job for the sheets stored in the container **(i.e. in the system, the controller (100) in the mailbox unit (10) reads information written into the memory regarding the print jobs stored. The controller reads the password, or log-in, information of the bin once the user enters in this information in order to obtain the print job in the bin. Once the controller reads the information related to the print job in the bin stored in the memory and verifies this information matches the password or identification information, then the bin is unlocked for the user to obtain the printed print job; see col. 21, line 30-col. 22, line 39 and col. 27, line 30-col. 30, line 54).**

Re claim 19: Mandel '544 discloses a recovery processing method of an image forming apparatus, the method comprising the step of:

an image forming step that forms images on sheets in accordance with an image forming job **(i.e. the system is usable with printing device that is used to produce hardcopy prints of a document. Since the printing device is used to print images on a sheet, the feature of the image forming apparatus is performed; see col. 1, line 62 – col. 2, line 38 and col. 7, lines 14-34);**

a conveying step that conveys the sheets on which the images have been formed in said image forming step **(i.e. with the printing device being connected to the mailboxing unit, the system involves directing a job that has been printed to**

the mailboxing unit in order to be stored into a bin for user retrieval. Since the jobs end up in the attached bin, the system has to include a means to convey the print job to the bin. The input feeder is used to input sheets from the printing device to the mailbox unit (10); see col. 1, line 60-col. 4, line 59 and col. 21, line 30-col. 22, line 39) to a container detachably attached to the image forming apparatus (i.e. the mailboxing unit is considered as a container that is attachable to any copier, facsimile or printing device. The mailboxing unit contains many mailbox bins that are used to store print jobs that are directed from the printer to the mailboxing unit; col. 1, line 60-col. 4, line 59 and col. 21, line 30-col. 22, line 39); and

a writing step that writes information relating to the image forming job for the sheets conveyed in said conveying step into a memory provided in the container (i.e. in the system, when jobs are printed and conveyed to the mailbox unit, these jobs are then collated and sorted into a bin that is in the mailboxing unit. Next, the bin assigned to a print job is then stored or written in a memory in order for the bin assignment to be recognized in the memory device when the user desires to retrieve the print jobs from the mailbox unit. The function of writing information in a memory unit is performed when the bin assignment is recorded or written on memory; see col. 30, lines 38-54).

Re claim 20: Mandel '544 discloses a recovery processing method for an image forming apparatus, comprising the steps of:

an image forming step of forming images on sheets in accordance with an image forming job (i.e. the system is usable with printing device that is used to produce hardcopy prints of a document. Since the printing device is used to print images on a sheet, the feature of the image forming apparatus is performed; see col. 1, line 62 – col. 2, line 38 and col. 7, lines 14-34);

a feeding step of feeding sheets stored in a container (i.e. with the printing device being connected to the mailboxing unit, the system involves directing a job that has been printed to the mailboxing unit in order to be stored into a bin for user retrieval. Since the jobs end up in the attached bin, the system has to include a means to convey the print job to the bin. The input feeder is used to input sheets from the printing device to the mailbox unit (10); see col. 1, line 60-col. 4, line 59 and col. 21, line 30-col. 22, line 39) detachably attached to the image forming apparatus (i.e. the mailboxing unit is attached or detached from any printing device in the system in order to sort printing jobs in assigned bins along with the bin assignment, along with other information, stored in the system memory; col. 1, line 60-col. 4, line 59 and col. 21, line 30-col. 22, line 39); and

a reading step of reading information written into a memory provided in the container and relating to the image forming job for the sheets stored in the container (i.e. in the system, the controller (100) in the mailbox unit (10) reads information written into the memory regarding the print jobs stored. The controller reads the password, or log-in, information of the bin once the user enters in this information in order to obtain the print job in the bin. Once the controller reads

the information related to the print job in the bin stored in the memory and verifies this information matches the password or identification information, then the bin is unlocked for the user to obtain the printed print job; see col. 21, line 30-col. 22, line 39 and col. 27, line 30-col. 30, line 54).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mandel '544, as applied to claim 5 above, and in view of Regimbal '722 (US Pub No 2003/0095722).

Re claim 6: The teachings of Mandel '544 are disclosed above.

However, Mandel '544 fails to teach an image forming apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the abnormality is at least one abnormality selected from the group consisting out of multiply feeding or skewing of sheets, registration misalignment, and color abnormality after image formation.

However, this is well known in the art as evidenced by Regimbal '722. Regimbal '722 discloses wherein the abnormality is at least one abnormality selected from the group consisting out of multiply feeding or skewing of sheets (**i.e. in the system of**

Regimbal '722, the skewing of sheets is the abnormality that occurs to the print media; see paragraphs [0022]-[0029]), registration misalignment, and color abnormality after image formation.

Therefore, in view of Regimbal '722, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to have the feature of wherein the abnormality is at least one abnormality selected from the group consisting out of multiply feeding or skewing of sheets, registration misalignment, and color abnormality after image formation incorporated in the device of Mandel '544 in order to detect and correct print skew in the system (as stated in Regimbal '722 paragraph [0007]).

Conclusion

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.
6. Keithley (US Pat No 6862375) discloses a skew correction for raster image transfer device.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to CHAD DICKERSON whose telephone number is (571)270-1351. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon. thru Thur. 9:00-6:30 Fri. 9:00-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Twyler Haskins can be reached on (571)-272-7406. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/C. D./
/Chad Dickerson/
Examiner, Art Unit 2625
April 8, 2008

/Twyler L. Haskins/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2625
4/10/08